

economy, I've got to destroy the environment. There's no way that we can harmonize a common future. And I have to tell you, based on 6 years of hard, sometimes brutal, daily experience, I think that's wrong.

And that I stand here tonight more idealistic about the prospect and, indeed, the necessity of bringing out the best in people than I was on the day I took the oath of office in January of 1993. And that in the end what really differentiates the two philosophies and certainly the strategies of the parties today is that. I'm not trying to fight a win/lose game with the Republicans in Washington for who stands where on the totem pole in this town. It is a very greasy totem pole.

What I'm trying to do is to find a way in which we can work together with integrity, air our differences with integrity, and come to some resolution that will reconcile us, one to the other, so we can build a common home and a common future. In other words, if we want to be a good influence in the rest of the world, we have to do good here at home. And if we really want to live in a global economy in which we are all increasingly interdependent and we expect America to do well in that kind of economy, we have to do right here at home. I believe that. You may think it sounds naive and Pollyanna; I can tell you it is based on hour after hour after hour of hard, cold experience in the cauldron that I have lived in for 6 years.

So I'm asking you not just to give your money. I'm asking you to be part of doing something that I think is pretty important. Our crowd is about to defy history. Our crowd is about to show that they don't want to be manipulated. Our crowd is about to say, "We've seen the last 6 years, and we like it, and we want an America that's coming together, not coming apart. We want an America that's committed to forward progress, not partisan fights, where politics is an instrument to advance people's lives, not to keep some people down to lift some up."

And I swear to you, what is right to do is what will work out best for America. We are moving into a world that is smaller and smaller and faster and faster. No one is smart enough to figure out how to solve every problem overnight. The only way we're going to

survive and do well is if we never, ever, ever forget that we have to find a way for all of our partners on this little planet to win together.

That's what I tried to do with America. With all the successes I've had—I could stand up here and list all these statistics—the truth is, I have not yet succeeded in convincing the American people to vote—to vote—for reconciliation, for a common future, for a common home, for an end to Washington-centered destructive politics. And maybe it is the irony of this terribly painful moment, which I regret very much putting you all through, that we are being given yet one more chance to affirm our better selves. But I'm telling you, based on my experience, the right thing to do is the right thing to do.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:17 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Ronald I. Dozoretz and Beth Dozoretz; Steve Grossman, national chair, Democratic National Committee; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); President Fernando Cardoso of Brazil; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999"

October 7, 1998

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval, H.R. 4101, the "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999." I am vetoing this bill because it fails to address adequately the crisis now gripping our Nation's farm community.

I firmly believe and have stated often that the Federal Government must play an important role in strengthening the farm safety net. This appropriations bill provides an opportunity each year for the Government to take steps to help hardworking farmers

achieve a decent living, despite the misfortune of bad weather, crop disease, collapsing markets, or other forces that affect their livelihoods. It is especially necessary for the Government to act this year, with prices dropping precipitously, crops destroyed by flood, drought, and disease, and where many farmers will see their net income drop by as much as 40 percent below a 5-year average.

Two years ago, when I signed the "Freedom to Farm Bill," I made clear that it did not provide an adequate safety net for our Nation's farmers. There is no better proof of that bill's shortcomings than the hardship in America's farm country this year. Our farm families are facing their worst crisis in a decade.

My Administration has already taken steps to address this crisis. In July, we announced the purchase of \$250 million of wheat to export to hungry people around the world. In August, I signed legislation to speed up farm program payments. But in the face of a growing emergency for our Nation's farmers, we must do more to ensure that American farmers can continue to provide, for years to come, the safest and least expensive food in the world. Last month, I sent to the Congress a request for \$2.3 billion in emergency aid for our farmers, and I supported Senator Daschle's and Harkin's proposal to boost farm income by lifting the cap on marketing loan rates.

I am extremely disappointed that the Congress has reacted to this agriculture emergency situation by sending me a bill that fails to provide an adequate safety net for our farmers. I have repeatedly stated that I would veto any emergency farm assistance bill if it did not adequately address our farmers' immediate needs, and this bill does not do enough.

The lack of sufficient emergency aid for farmers in this bill is particularly problematic in light of the bill's other provisions that affect farmers and their rural communities. Cutting edge agricultural research is absolutely essential to improve our farmers' productivity and to maintain their advantage over our competitors around the world. But this bill eliminates the \$120 million in competitive research grants for this year that I strongly supported and signed into law just

last June. It also blocks the \$60 million from the Fund for Rural America provided through that same bill, preventing needed additional rural development funds that would help our Nation's rural communities to diversify their economies and improve their quality of life. The bill also cuts spending for our food safety initiative in half, denying funds for research, public education, and other food safety improvements.

Many of our most vulnerable farmers have also had to face an obstacle that no one in America ever should have to confront: racial discrimination. Over 1,000 minority farmers have filed claims of discrimination by USDA's farm loan programs in the 1980s and early 1990s that the statute of limitations bars from being addressed. While I am pleased that this legislation contains a provision waiving the statute of limitations, I am disappointed that it does not contain the language included in the Senate's version of this bill, which accelerates the resolution of the cases, provides claimants with a fair and full court review if they so choose, and covers claims stemming from USDA's housing loan programs.

Therefore, as I return this bill, I again call on the Congress to send me a comprehensive plan, before this session ends, that adequately responds to the very real needs of our farmers at this difficult time.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 7, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 8.

Remarks on the Decision of Certain Health Maintenance Organizations To Opt Out of Some Medicare Markets

October 8, 1998

Thank you. I would like to begin by thanking Senator Rockefeller and Congressman Dingell for their steadfast support of Medicare and their participation in our Medicare Commission. Let me say just in advance, I would think that the very issue we discuss today offers further evidence that it is time